

## 2015 Dane County Women's Summit Advisory Meeting

Wednesday, October 30, 2013

Clark & Boardman, LLC Madison, WI

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**Synthesis:** In this initial meeting, there was general consensus that the 2015 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Summit on the Status of Women presents a powerful opportunity to draw attention to the current status of women in Dane County in certain key areas.

Whether this takes the form of a single "summit" event, a series of events, or some combination of event(s) and virtual interactivity, the vision is to engage the broadest spectrum of the community, particularly women of color, those of lower social economic status, and young women / girls, in the planning as well as the activity.

The goal is to create opportunities for individuals who participate because they're concerned about a particular issue to then connect with others (people and organizations) addressing the interconnectedness of these issues in the lives of women and girls. The focus is on facilitating awareness, empowerment, and connectivity among individuals that leads to future action, rather than a singular "action plan" or agenda.

Among the issue areas from Beijing that generated the most energy / interest were **women's economic status, education & leadership (civic, political, business), violence against women, women's health, and women & the environment**. Fortunately, there is a significant amount of data available in each of these areas to support their inclusion as a priority. There is recognition that racism, economic disparity, and the impact of these issues on girls as well as elder women are universal across the issue areas, and a commitment to ensuring they are addressed holistically (integrated into each issue area).

At a second lunch meeting in early 2014, we will further develop these issues and explore the most appropriate format(s), as well as beginning to identify steps toward implementation. **Women who were invited but unable to attend the first meeting are welcome, as are additional women in leadership with experience in the identified issue areas.**

**There will be an online poll to select a date by mid January – please reply as soon as possible.**

## October 30, 2013 Meeting NOTES:

### OPENING COMMENTS

Proposing a Dane County Women's Summit in recognition of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women that will:

- Engage women in issues affecting their lives.
- Move women to personally commit to addressing issues specifically important to them.
- Assist women in identifying networks of similarly interested women to cooperatively pursue the issues they deem most important.

A few parameters for the 2015 event at this time:

- It will focus on issues affecting women and girls residing in Dane County – although that wouldn't preclude people other geographic areas attending
- We will seek to collaborate with individuals and organizations who share a mutual commitment to addressing local women's issues
- We don't envision that a centrally organized "grand plan" or "agenda" for Dane County women's issues will be a result of it.

No current parameters regarding:

- Issues to address
- Format
- Target audience(s)
- Date
- Location (other than within Dane County)
- Length
- Budget/funding

Purpose of today's Advisory Meeting

- Identify a broad range of issues impacting Dane County women and girls
- Narrow down to a shorter list of issues that are widely recognized and are important to women moving ahead.
- Begin considering target audiences

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### DISCUSSION

#### Best Possible Outcomes

- Many groups will have found ways to work together effectively, have larger presence in Dane County
- Increased number of women serving in leadership roles (nonprofit, profit, public service, elected office)
- Dane County platform for action collective,
- Strengthen women of color's voices

- Greater awareness, what's going on in community
- Pathway to connect/close gap between young girls and women
- Includes a focus on young girls
- It's everyone's issues, not only affecting women
- Beyond a middleclass/white "women's movement" making sure to include marginalized populations
- Achievable outcomes

#### Barriers to achieving outcomes

- Madison's footprint – gatherings are small, clusters; all over community; hard to connect groups. No one place to expose clusters of groups/people
- Getting people engaged – busy schedules, communication w/technology, show the already engaged people the intersections/connections
- Getting beyond self-interests
- Basic fear – personal, intimidation, involvement, taking next step
- Not a cohesive group here in Madison to inform them of resources/ spreading knowledge from those who have the capacity and interest, services
- Financial resources
- Time to focus on most important issues
- Getting awareness out

#### Present advantages

- Time – 2 years
- Not an election year
- Lots of expertise, in various areas
- Madison – progressive community, fits values, Madison-centric
- "Time is really right" can light a fire, many issues are prevalent or on news
- Groups have started paying attention, variety of groups/people – a resurgence of women's issues

#### Important issues to consider

- Diversity - in recognizing issues, bringing voices, and leading
- Closing gap between women and girls Clarification, from statewide org, Dane County is the backyard
- Violence against women
- Focused on inclusion- in all issues- African American, Latino, Hmong
- Making all voices as strong (as middle-class white women's voices are currently, though "all boats float to the top")
- Women in power and decision making – within that, issues relating to media/advocacy/economy
- Have greater roles, therefore totality of women's life would be advantaged
- Education of women and girls, women in health, and violence against women

- Like to see more living-wage jobs, even for working-class students
  - Women and the environment (more statewide), peace by Alliance group-Native American women - global and local, women in environmental jobs, women making a difference in the environment
  - Violence against women
  - Affordable, nutritious food
  - Highly educated women placed in valued jobs
  - Job availability - occupational segregation, types of jobs and careers, inclusion in all economic levels
  - Racism in Dane County - help women meet employment/training/health/domestic abuse challenges
  - Inequities/disparities – education outcomes, economic stability, health assessments: (1) data to determine largest issues, (2) inclusion (age, race, education, income), (3) navigating systems that are in place, (4) leverage the advantages that Dane County brings to the table.
  - Fearing loss of safety net, many who are women/women trying to raise families
  - Cross-pollination of all issues (racial, economic, etc.)
  - Citizen engagement – deal with concerns that after 2014 is too late, work to avoid disenfranchisement
  - Political involvement
  - Reproductive health
  - Gauging things before November 2014 and assessing/reflecting on success stories and where additional improvement is needed
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### Next Steps

- Lunchtime is good time to meet
- Avoid vacation times (breaks)
- Avoid partisanship
- Focus next meeting on assessing key issues (through greater audience/representation, through numbers)  
OR rally around passion/interest to elevate women's status in multiple areas and to further network